

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
a network computer (NC) client booting from a boot image provided by an NC server, the boot image including information identifying the location of one or more ~~user-system~~ volumes on the NC server, the one or more ~~user~~ system volumes containing operating system software; and
in response to an attempt to modify the contents of the one or more ~~user-system~~ volumes, the NC client causing information identifying a modification associated with the attempt to be recorded on the NC server in a shadow system volume of a mass storage medium associated with the NC client separate from the one or more ~~user-system~~ volumes ~~in a shadow system volume storage medium associated with the NC client~~.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising
transmitting information identifying a user of the NC client to the NC server;
receiving information identifying the user's desktop environment preferences from the NC server; and
customizing a desktop environment of the NC client in accordance with the user's desktop environment preferences.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the NC client maintains a copy of the operating system software from the one or more system volumes ~~are presented to the NC client, the operating system software being as a split~~

operating system including a core operating system image from a core system volume that can be read but not written by the NC client and a user operating system image from a user system volume that can be read and/or written by the NC client, wherein the storage area associated with the NC client comprises the shadow volume corresponding to the user operating system volume, and wherein the NC client causing information identifying a modification associated with the attempt to be recorded comprises tracking modifications to the user operating system volume in the shadow volume.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising, prior to booting from a boot image provided by ~~an~~the NC server, (1) the NC client initiating a boot process by booting into a local memory of the NC client, (2) the NC client transmitting a boot request to the NC server, and (3) the NC client receiving the boot image from the NC server.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, booting from a boot image provided by ~~an~~the NC server further includes the NC client locally executing the boot image and mounting the one or more system volumes.
6. (Currently Amended) A network computer (NC) client comprising:
a bootstrapping means for booting from a boot image provided by an NC server,
the boot image including information identifying the location of one or more ~~user~~-system volumes on the NC server, the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes containing operating system software; and

a redirecting means, responsive to an attempt to modify the contents of the one or more system volumes, for causing information identifying a modification associated with the attempt to be recorded on the NC server separate from the one or more system volumes in a shadow system volume of a disk medium associated with the NC client.

7. (Original) The NC client of claim 6, further comprising a banding means for incorporating the modification within one or more bands comprising a predetermined number of blocks.

8. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

a network computer (NC) client booting from a boot image provided by an NC server, the boot image including information identifying the location of one or more ~~user~~-system volumes on the NC server, the one or more ~~user~~ system volumes containing operating system software;

the NC client mounting the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes; and

in response to a write request from a file system of the NC client that contains a modification to the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes, a block device driver of the NC client redirecting the write request and causing information identifying the modification to be recorded on the NC server in a shadow system volume of a mass storage medium associated with the NC client that is separate from the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes.

9. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
- a network computer (NC) client booting from a boot image provided by an NC server, the boot image including information identifying the location of one or more ~~user~~-system volumes on the NC server, the one or more ~~user~~ system volumes containing operating system software that has one or more customizable attributes;
- in response to a change to an attribute of the one or more customizable attributes, the NC client causing information identifying the change to be recorded on the NC server in a shadow system volume of a disk medium associated with the NC client that is separate and distinct from the one or more ~~user~~ system volumes.
10. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:
- a network computer (NC) server providing a boot image to an NC client, the boot image including information identifying the location on the NC server of one or more ~~user~~-system volumes containing operating system software;
- and
- in response to a write request from the NC client that contains a modification to the operating system software, the NC server recording information identifying the modification on the NC server in a shadow system volume of a mass storage medium associated with the NC client that is separate from the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising the NC server maintaining the one or more ~~user-system~~ volumes as a split operating system including a single core operating system image in a core system volume that can be read but not written by the NC client and a user operating system image in a ~~user operating-system~~ volume that can be both read and written by the NC client.
12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 11, wherein the shadow system volume contains a non-persistent shadow volume corresponding to the user ~~operating-system~~ volume to which modifications to the user ~~operating-system~~ volume are recorded.
13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising storing information from the shadow system volume to a persistent, user-specific storage area for use in a subsequent user session.
14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:
receiving information identifying the user of the NC client; and
providing the NC client with information indicative of the user's desktop environment by accessing the persistent, user-specific storage area.
15. (Currently Amended) A network computer (NC) server comprising:
a boot server means for providing a boot image to an NC client, the boot image including information identifying the location on the NC server of one or more ~~user-system~~ volumes containing operating system software; and

a storage management means for recording information identifying a modification to the operating system software in a shadow system volume of a mass storage medium associated with the NC client that is separate from the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes, the storage management means operative in response to a write request from the NC client that contains the modification.

16. (Currently Amended) A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform the steps of:
providing a boot image to a network computer (NC) client, the boot image including information identifying a location on an NC server of one or more system volumes containing operating system software; and
in response to a write request from the NC client that contains a modification to the operating system software, recording information identifying the modification in a shadow system volume of a mass storage medium associated with the NC client that is separate from the one or more ~~user~~ system volumes.
17. (Currently Amended) In a network computer (NC) system, a method comprising:
an NC server providing a boot image to an NC client, the boot image including information identifying the location on the NC server of one or more system volumes containing operating system software;
the NC client booting from the boot image provided by the NC server;

the NC client mounting the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes;
in response to a write request from a file system of the NC client that contains a
modification to the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes, a block device
driver of the NC client redirecting the write request to a shadow system
volume of a mass storage medium on the NC server that is associated with
the NC client and which is separate from the one or more ~~user~~-system
volumes;
the NC server receiving the write request from the NC client; and
the NC server causing information identifying the modification to be recorded in
the shadow system volume associated with the NC client.

18. (Currently Amended) A network computer (NC) system comprising:
an NC server configured to provide a boot image to one or more NC clients
associated with the NC system, the boot image including information
identifying the location on the NC server of one or more ~~user~~-system
volumes containing operating system software; and
an NC client coupled in communication with the NC server, the NC client
configured to receive and boot from the boot image, the NC client
including a file system process and a block device driver, the block device
driver configured to redirect write requests directed to the one or more
~~user~~-system volumes to a shadow system volume of a mass storage
medium on the NC server that is associated with the NC client and which
is separate from the one or more ~~user~~-system volumes.